

# SIERRA CLUB BULLETIN

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## Report on the 1936 Outing

**I**N SPITE OF interminable Ansel Adams miles and in spite of a steady week of rain, the members of the 1936 Sierra Club outing party enjoyed an unusually pleasant trip. It was the sort of outing that appealed to all concerned—a quantity of fish for the fishermen, several 14,000-foot peaks for the mountain climbers (each and every peak equipped with at least one hazardous approach), lots of rocks for the rock climbers, and pleasant camps on icy streams, with warmer lakes for the tea parties and the aquatically inclined.

Thanks to a mountaineering committee which "clicked," there were no serious accidents of any sort to turn the management's hair gray. Thanks again to Allie Robinson, the packtrain was seldom late. The unusual experiment of a middle two-weeks party proved fairly successful. At least the only complaint concerning the above mentioned came from that party itself. As a result of being unavoidably detained in three camps—all in the Mount Whitney territory—it felt cheated out of walking a few extra Adams miles.

The High Trippers this year tripped almost exclusively within the precincts of Sequoia National Park. The courtesy and thoughtfulness of Colonel White and his staff of rangers and CCC boys went far toward

making the outing one of the most enjoyable in many years. Equal courtesy was offered by Ranger Brown of Sequoia National Forest in the camps we made at Cloud Canyon and Deadman Canyon.

Starting from Wolverton, some four or five miles above Giant Forest, on July 11, our party tramped over the boulevard-like High Sierra Trail some sixteen miles into River Valley. After a one-night stand we had a day to test the hardest among us. We climbed some 3,500 feet over the magnificent High Sierra Trail to Kaweah Gap, dropped down four miles into the Big Arroyo, and then in order to reach our next camp at Little Five Lakes Basin, we had to climb five miles up an old sheeptrail, weaving back and forth over some eighty-seven switchbacks (we counted them) and over moraine after moraine until we finally dragged our poor abused bodies into the beautiful Five Lakes camp. Suffice it to say that more than one old-timer came in on a horse that day. At this point the management found it wise to grant a day's reprieve, and next day most of us had recovered sufficiently to avail ourselves of the excellent fishing and beautiful lakes in which to swim.

From Little Five Lakes we had an easy ten-mile day to the gem of the Sierra, Mo-

rairie Lake, where we made another two-night stand. As Moraine Lake is widely known to be the only warm lake in that part of the Sierra, it would be vain to report the recreational indulgences during that period. From Moraine it was an unpleasant, but far from difficult walk to the Kern Canyon camp where our party rested one night, before ascending the precipitous trail to Tyndall Meadow. Mr. Colby, who accompanied us this first week, seemed obsessed with the desire to pass the "cache" with a blind eye in order to make camp on the top of Shepherd Pass, which barrier it was necessary for him to pass over the following day. However, the "cache" guard held him back, and we all breathed a sigh of profound relief.

At Tyndall Meadow we stopped a day in order to allow the middle two-weeks party to join us, then passed on to a beautiful camp on Whitney Creek above Crabtree Meadow. Here we passed the most pleasant period of the trip, and even Dan Tachet climbed Mount Whitney. In fact there was scarcely a member of the party who did not ascend this highest mountain in the United States.

After this pleasant interlude we returned to Tyndall Meadow and the deluge descended. We have been told on the best of authority that it never rains at night in the Sierra! Then what of the night of July 26, to say nothing of the morning of the 27th, when, for some strange reason, the dunnage was not weighed? From the 26th to the 31st, it poured, as regularly as clock-work from noon until four-thirty or five o'clock in the afternoon. It speaks much for the morale of the party that its spirits were so well wrapped in ponchos that they were dampened not even a little bit. The middle "two-weekers"

really seemed sorry to leave, and the newly arrived, last "two-weekers" did not appear to be a bit dismayed at their wet welcome.

When we said goodbye to Milestone, one of the most spectacular camps of the trip, we left our friend, Jupiter Pluvius, behind us. We cut back down into the Kern and from Junction Meadow climbed up again into the awe-inspiring Kern-Kaweah, where we enjoyed another two-night stop beside a crystal clear stream. Between this camp and our next in Cloud Canyon, we were confronted with the 12,000-foot Colby Pass, which we ascended with no great difficulty, for at this stage of the game our legs were nearly as hard and well-muscled as Norman Clyde's. At the top of Colby Pass we left the Park and entered Sequoia Forest. As our camps at both Cloud Canyon and Deadman Canyon were in the National Forest, we did not re-enter the Park until we had climbed Elizabeth Pass, after our last two-day camp at Deadman Canyon. Another superb trail led us from the top of Elizabeth Pass to Lone Pine Meadow, where, much to our regret, the last official campfire of the outing was conducted by our bearded pedometer. From Lone Pine it was a long day over the High Sierra Trail back to Wolverton.

It was with a great deal of regret that business and such sundry, sordid details of everyday life forced us to disband at Wolverton on the morning of August 8 in order to return to our various homes. From the standpoint of the management, the members of the 1936 outing were "grand" and they were directly responsible for any success the management may have had in the running of the 1936 Outing.

FRANCIS D. TAPPAAN.

## Annual Photograph Exhibit

The annual photograph exhibit will be held as follows:

*October 5 to 12* at the Club headquarters, 1050 Mills Tower, 220 Bush Street, *San Francisco*. (In addition to the regular hours the Club rooms will be open from 2 to 6 o'clock, Saturday afternoon, October 10.)

*October 16 to 23* at the headquarters of the Southern California Chapter, 445 Wilcox Building, 206 South Spring Street, *Los Angeles*.

*October 27 to November 2*, under the auspices of the Riverside Chapter, at 7373 Magnolia Avenue, *Riverside*.

*November 6 to 7*, under the auspices of the Loma Prieta Chapter, *Palo Alto*.

It is hoped that all who took photographs on the 1936 Sierra Club outing will exhibit their albums, for in each collection there are sure to be pictures of special interest not to be found elsewhere. Members of the Club who took photographs this summer on other trips in the Sierra or in other mountain regions are also invited to send in their albums.

It has long been the custom for exhibitors to permit members of the Club to obtain pictures at a slight margin above cost. For this purpose it is requested that each photograph be numbered and that the price be stated. Orders will be placed through the Club office and will be forwarded after the close of the exhibit.

## Proposed Glacier Park Outing for 1937

The Outing Committee has under consideration an outing to Glacier National Park in Montana for 1937, during the last three weeks of July and the first week of August. When the Sierra Club outing party visited Glacier National Park in 1924, there was such a demand for places on the outing that only one-half of those who applied could be accommodated. Since that trip there has been a demand for repeating the outing, in order that many of those who were unable to make the trip last time, as well as others, might have the opportunity of visiting Glacier. It is planned to make the trip as comprehensive as possible, traveling up the westerly side of the park and stopping at the outstanding points of interest, crossing the Continental Divide by packtrain in the northern portion of the park, and then traveling down the east side of the park to the railroad starting-point from which the return will be made. Opin-

ion is practically unanimous that Glacier National Park is one of the most beautiful of all of our great wonderlands. The views across the sapphire glacial lakes to the picturesque peaks and glaciers of the Continental Divide, with the vivid green of the northern forests and the sculpturing of the varicolored rock cliffs, make compositions that are difficult to equal. There are many descriptive pamphlets published by the National Park Service on Glacier National Park, which may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. Most of the books on national parks also contain descriptions of Glacier. Since a trip of this character is quite an undertaking from the executive and financial standpoints, it is important that the Outing Committee obtain as soon as possible some definite idea of how many will wish to take this trip. The total expense from San Francisco, including the outing deposit, railroad

fare, Pullman or tourist berths, meals *en route*, will be in the neighborhood of \$155 and \$138, depending upon the class of accommodations desired. Los Angeles members will have to add the additional round trip fare from Los Angeles to San Francisco of approximately \$15. In order to aid the Com-

mittee in determining this matter, please write to the Sierra Club, 1050 Mills Tower, San Francisco, without delay, if you have any definite idea of taking the trip. Your application will be in no way binding but is for information only.

THE OUTING COMMITTEE.

## Progress at Clair Tappaan Lodge

*Attention skiers and would-be skiers!*

Improvements and additions being made this summer at Clair Tappaan Lodge will double its capacity and add considerably to the comfort and convenience of members and their guests. A dormitory annex with sixty beds is being constructed off the north end of the main lodge. Under this is a large basement which will be used as a work shop and ski room. It will eliminate the great inconvenience of storing and waxing skis in the main lodge. A large hotel stove has been installed in the kitchen. Heating and lighting facilities will be materially improved. Another thing to look forward to is the probability of a custodian who will also act as ski instructor.

If you are in the Bay region, we would appreciate your help on work parties. There is still a great deal of work to be done before the snow begins to fall, including the completion of the dormitory annex, various jobs on the main lodge, and chopping and laying in the winter wood supply. Those interested should write or call Louise Hildebrand, *before October 1* at 500 Coventry Road, telephone Berkeley 3960, in the evening only; *after October 1* at The Ski Hut, 2480 Bancroft Way, telephone Thornwall 6160, between 9:30 and 12:00 in the morning.

Monetary contributions are just as acceptable as labor. Address such contributions to the chairman of the Clair Tappaan Lodge Committee in care of the Sierra Club office.

## The Spectre of the Brocken

The Spectre of the Brocken, referred to by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as "an enormously magnified shadow of an observer cast upon a bank of cloud in high mountain regions when the sun is low," has been seen but seldom in California, the only occasion previously recorded in the *SIERRA CLUB BULLETIN* having been on Mount Tamalpais in 1933 (See *S. C. B.*, August, 1933, 18:4, p. 154). The *Encyclopaedia* says further: "The shadow, often accompanied by coloured bands, reproduces every motion of

the observer in the form of a gigantic but misty image of himself."

During the past summer several observations have been reported. At one of the campfires at Crabtree Meadow, Oliver Kehrlein told the members of the annual outing about several occasions when he had seen the Spectre. On July 18, 1936, only a day or so before, at sunset on the summit of Mount Whitney he and three other Sierrans observed the Spectre for about two minutes. Each could see his multi-colored halo on the

cloudlets condensing in Lone Pine Canyon, but could not see those of the others. The following morning from the same summit the party again observed the phenomenon above the range just north of Crabtree Meadow. This time the halo was white, the shadow was smaller than the night before, and the occurrence lasted only about four seconds.

Oliver Kehrlein also reported seeing the Spectre on two previous occasions. "About 1927" from Mount Whitney he observed it for several minutes over the White Mountain Range, and in October 1935 from Telescope Peak he saw it at sunset over the Funeral Range. In both of these cases the halo was white and the shadows "extremely large, perhaps a thousand feet or so, although there is no way of measuring the size or distance of the image."

The night following this report at the campfire, a large group of "high-trippers" ascended Mount Whitney in the hope of observing the Spectre. Their difficulties and subsequent disappointment were later recorded in a campfire skit entitled *The Spectre of the Broccoli*, so that the Spectre became a rather important member of the outing.

A very interesting occurrence, important because of the unusually low altitude of observation, was reported by George T. Tolson of Berkeley. He writes:

"On Sunday morning, May 10, 1936, I rose to take my accustomed climb to Grizzly Peak. The peak is situated about a mile and a half east of the University of California and has an altitude of about 1620 feet. It was an exceedingly foggy morning. About fifty feet from the top of Grizzly the sun suddenly appeared, forming a clearly visible, colorless, semi-circular rainbow in the fog,

similar to the lunar rainbows that may be seen occasionally in a night rain or in the spray of a waterfall, when the moon is about full. After a few minutes the drifting fog again obscured the sun and the rainbow was gone.

"Thrilled by the, to me, entirely novel experience of seeing a rainbow in the fog, I climbed rapidly to the crest of Grizzly and emerged once more suddenly into sunshine. Turning quickly about I beheld a colored, completely circular rainbow in the fog—complete but for the fact that my hips cut the lower part of the circle. The shadow of my head was at the center. My outstretched arms reached clear across the circle. As I moved about, the circle moved with me, keeping my head in the center. Having been a nature-worshipper for half a century and climbed many mountains in various parts of the world, I judged the experience to be exceedingly rare and it seemed best to make careful observations. The rainbow seemed to be about twenty degrees below the horizon and the sun at a like altitude and directly in the opposite direction. It was not far from seven-thirty. The galaxy of colors and shadows seemed about a hundred and fifty yards down the mountain and to be something like fifteen feet in diameter. There were, however, no intervening objects by which to calculate measurements. Again the fog drifted by and the vision was gone forever."

The widely varying conditions under which these observances occurred and the variations from the usual form described in the *Encyclopaedia* indicate a need for more careful and complete observations. The Editor of the *Bulletin* would appreciate communications from any who have observed the Spectre, especially in California.

## The 1936 Mount Waddington Expedition

On July 21, 1936, Fritz Wiessner of New York and William P. House of the Yale Mountaineering Club made a successful assault on the previously unclimbed summit of Mount Waddington, "the finest mountaineering objective in North America." The joint Sierra Club and British Columbia Mountaineering Club party (See *S. C. B.*, June, 1936, 21:3, p. xii) was not so fortunate. On July 19, a party of five (on two ropes) turned back on account of approaching darkness, and had to spend the night on the ice. Again, on July 22, a party of six

turned back at a point well below the summit. Giving up Mount Waddington as a bad job, the party turned to the numerous first ascents in the region. Mount Bell, the Jester, and Mount Halberdier were ascended for the first time. Climbs were also made of the Waddington snow summit, Mount Cavalier, and Mount Vigilante. The hospitality of the British Columbia Mountaineering Club was one of the factors which made the trip thoroughly enjoyable. A complete report of the expedition will appear in the next magazine number of the *SIERRA CLUB BULLETIN*.

## Miscellaneous

*An exhibition of tempera paintings by Leland Curtis, made on the 1936 High Trip will be held in the Sierra Club rooms from September 21 to October 12, 1936.*

*Additional Committee Appointments:*  
High Sierra Trails Committee—Walter A. Starr (chairman), L. A. Barrett, S. T. Hayward, J. N. LeConte, Norman B. Livermore, Jr.

Library and Room Committee—Louise Hildebrand (chairman), Dorothy H. Hug-gins, Lee L. Stopple.

*The High Sierra Trails Committee asks that all members of the Club who have been out this summer will report to the Committee on the condition of the trails they have traveled over, with special reference to places*

where repair work is most needed to make the trails easily passable for pack animals. The Committee is desirous of gathering all the information possible on trail conditions. Please address letters to W. A. Starr, Sierra Club, 1050 Mills Tower, San Francisco.

*Copies of the Title-page and Table of Contents for the magazine numbers issued in 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, to be used in binding these four numbers together, are available and may be obtained upon request.*

*Errata.* The volume number of the May and June, 1936, issues of the *SIERRA CLUB BULLETIN*, numbers 2 and 3, was inadvertently stated as "Volume XXII" and should be "Volume XXI."



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